



The Kitchen Center  
for Video · Music · Dance  
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## **Hanging Man**

**March 3-6 [Wed-Sat] 8:30 PM \$15**  
**March 4 Post-performance discussion**

**U.S. Premiere from The Czech Republic**

*A Bat's Ballet: Physical theater, modern mime, and living sculptures.*

Hanging upside down for the entire evening, four performers invent a new movement vocabulary in *Hanging Man*--an acrobatic dance work from Prague, directed by founding father and living legend of modern European pantomime, **Ctibor Turba**. In 11 dramatic sequences, with the cast sometimes hanging by one foot, a roller-skate, or weighted down by stones, *Hanging Man* suspends the logic of perception. The horizontal plane no longer determines the nature of motion, forcing performers to invent a completely new emotional vocabulary of interaction. **Halka Tresnakova, Kamil Bystricky, Petr Kruselnicky, and Ondrej Lipovsky** are the "introverted" performers who bend, arch, and flop to minimalist and machine-like sounds.

One Czech critic dubbed *Hanging Man* as a "Bat's Ballet," while another compared its concentrated strength of imagination to that of *Haiku* and the free expression of Samuel Beckett's dramatic texts. The work represents a new and provocative development in movement theater from the Czech Republic, whose pantomime and puppet theater are truly world-class. Director Ctibor Turba is a pioneer in the uses of alternate movement in space. He is also a formative clown theater artist and received the American "Red Skeleton Award" in 1991 for his influence as a pedagogue, artist, and director. Premiered in Prague in 1997, *Hanging Man* has been performed throughout the Czech Republic, at the MIMOS Festival in France (the world's largest festival of pantomime), and at the Berlin Festival in Tanz. The Kitchen is presenting the U.S. premiere of the work.

### **About the Artist...**

Ctibor Turba, born in 1944, began his professional career in 1968, when his pantomime theater of Alfred Jarry was hailed as a turning point in European pantomime theater. He and his collaborators, Boris Hybner,

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Richard Ryda, and Josef Platzer, rejected the elegant poetics of the lyrically imaginative pantomime predominant at the time in favor of mute physical dramatic art and black grotesque. On stage they made use of devices from dramatic theater such as scenery, props, and the like; and as clowns in hobo suits and without white masks they paid homage to the legacies of Jarry, Artaud, Beckett, and especially Keaton's grotesque comedy. A three month affiliation with Jacques Lecoque in Paris in 1972 launched Turba's career abroad, and he turned towards pedagogy and directing when, for health reasons, he was unable to continue performing. His career in Czechoslovakia before the 1989 revolution was continually marred by his uneasy relationship with the authorities; but since the fall of the socialist regime, he has been given the chance to systematically realize his ideas and intentions at home. He was named Professor and Chair of the Department of Non-Verbal Theater at the Academy for Performing Arts in Prague. In the 90s, he founded the International Studio of Movement Theater and the Studio Kaple laboratory, and in 1997, he opened a new theater in Prague, known as Alfred in the Courtyard (Alfred ve dvore), where this piece originates.

A co-production of Mime Centre Berlin and Mime Theatre "Alfred in the Yard," Prague. In cooperation with the Czech Center New York. Supported by the Trust for Mutual Understanding and the Foundation for a Civil Society.

**The Kitchen is located at 512 West 19th Street, between 10th and 11th Avenues. For more information or to reserve press comps, please call 212.255.5793.**